

DISK #54

Points to be Made in the McLaughlin Interview

- I have no choice but to do whatever I legally can to prevent information damaging to intelligence sources and methods from becoming public.

- The National Security Law obligates me to protect intelligence sources and methods. I have to seek to use any law that the Congress has enacted for this purpose.

- Communications intelligence is particularly sensitive and particularly vulnerable. A great many lives and years of fighting have been saved by our success in reading messages between the Japanese and the German governments and their military commanders during World War II. One whisper of public information could have deprived us of that intelligence and many lives would have been lost and further years of fighting required.

- We are confronted by precisely the same problem today. Over recent weeks, publication of information about our intelligence capabilities has deprived us of warning and information about terrorist attacks and innocent civilians and American Embassies and other installations. Also, information provided to the media has put in jeopardy one of our best intelligence capabilities, probably our best hope of learning about military plans and getting advanced warning of military attack against us.

- All this puts the intelligence collection assets, the organization we have for this purpose, the people around the world who want to help us, and the cooperative relationships we have with friendly countries at risk. This represents a investment of billions of dollars and the lifetime work of many skilled and dedicated people. If we continue to have classified information revealed in the media, what we have achieved will be eroded with great damage to our personal safety and national security. There can be no doubt about that.

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